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ABSTRACT

This study is based on new projections of Hispanic population growth from 2000 to 2050, which uses unique methodology to disaggregate growth rates and other demographic indicators by generation. The result is a more detailed look at demographic trends than is possible from the Census Bureau's projections or its published tabulations of data from decennial counts. Data indicate that the Latino immigrant population can be expected to continue increasing, and the growth rate for the second generation has already gained sufficient momentum that it will remain higher than the first generation's even if immigration flows accelerate. The Hispanic population will grow by 25 million people between 2000-2020, with the second generation accounting for 47 percent of the increase. The same basic trends are evident even with an estimate of immigration flow 50-percent higher than the mid-range assumption. About one in seven new students enrolling in U.S. schools from 2000-2020 will be second generation Latino. During this same time, the Latino labor force is projected to increase by 77 percent (compared to 9 percent in the non-Hispanic labor force). Changes in the generational composition of the Latino population will have broad consequences because of important differences in many characteristics (language, education, income, and intermarriage). (SM)

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Study

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The Rise of the Second Generation: Changing Patterns in Hispanic Population Growth

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The Rise of the Second Generation: Changing Patterns in Hispanic Population Growth

Introduction

As it continues to grow, the composition of the Hispanic population is undergoing a fundamental change: Births in the United States are outpacing immigration as the key source of growth. Over the next twenty years this will produce an important shift in the makeup of the Hispanic population with second-generation Latinos—the U.S.-born children of immigrants—emerging as the largest component of that population. Given the very substantial differences in earnings, education, fluency in English, and attitudes between foreign-born and native-born Latinos, this shift has profound implications for many realms of public policy, and indeed for anyone seeking to understand the nature of demographic change in the United States.

Since the 1970s, immigration has represented by far the fastest and the largest source of Hispanic population growth, and, as a result, the first generation—the foreign born—has become more numerous than the second or the third-plus generations—those born in the United States of U.S.-born parents. This demographic equation is now rapidly changing. Consequently, the effects of Hispanic population growth on the nation are shifting in important ways. Most simply, the largest impact over the past 30 years has been measured in the number of Spanish-speaking immigrants joining the labor force. However, in the current decade and for the foreseeable future there will be very sizeable impacts from the number of native-born Latinos entering the nation's schools and in the flow of English-speaking, U.S.-educated Hispanics entering the labor market. Between 2000 and 2020, the number of second-generation Latinos in U.S. schools will double and the number in the U.S. labor force will triple. Nearly one-fourth of labor force growth over the next 20 years will be from children of Latino immigrants.

This study is based on new projections of Hispanic population growth from 2000 to 2050 developed by Jeffrey S. Passel, a veteran demographer and principal research associate at the Population Studies Center of the Urban Institute. Passel uses his own well-established methodology to disaggregate growth rates and other demographic indicators by generation (Edmonston and Passel, 1994). The result is a more detailed look at demographic trends than is possible from the Census Bureau's projections or its published tabulations of data from decennial counts.

Defining generations in this study:

- First Generation: Born outside the United States, its territories or possessions. Can be naturalized U.S. citizens, legal immigrants or undocumented immigrants.
- Second Generation: Born in the United States with at least one foreign born parent. U.S. citizens by birth.
- Third-plus Generations: Born in the United States with both parents also born in the United States. U.S. citizens by birth.

Generational Change

Between 1970 and 2000 the Hispanic population grew by 25.7 million and immigrants accounted for 45 percent of that increase while the second generation accounted for 28 percent (Table 1). As a result, in 2000 the first generation totaled 14.2 million people, or 40 percent of the Latino population, while the second generation counted 9.9 million, or 28 percent. The third-plus generation numbered 11.3 million and made up 32 percent of the Hispanic population.

Table 1:
1970 to 2000—Immigrants Dominate Growth

Change in the Hispanic Population, 1970-2000: 9.6 million to 35.3 million	Growth (in thousands)	Growth (in percent)	Share of Total Growth
Total Hispanic Population	25,690	267%	100%
1st Generation	11,515	436%	45%
2nd Generation	7,132	259%	28%
3rd +Generations	7,042	167%	27%

The growth of the second generation accelerated in the 1990s and reached 63% for the decade, up from 52 percent in the 1980s, surpassing the growth due to immigration (55 percent in the 1990s and 78 percent in the 1980s) even as the nation experienced a record influx from Latin America. This pattern was the legacy of the high levels of immigration in the 1970s and 1980s. Young adults have dominated most migrant streams in modern times, and that is certainly true of Latino immigrants who are concentrated in the child-bearing years. The median age of first generation Hispanics in 2000 was 33.4 years old compared to 38.5 in the non-Hispanic white population overall. Fertility rates are higher among Latino immigrants than in any other segment of the U.S. population. In 2000 the fertility rate was 3.51 births per woman for first-generation Hispanics compared to 1.84 for non-Hispanic whites overall. It was higher even than the fertility rates among black (2.53) and Asian (2.60) immigrants (Edmonston et al., 2003).

Although the Latino immigrant population can be expected to continue increasing, the growth rate for the second generation has already gained sufficient momentum that it will remain higher than the first generation's even if immigration flows accelerate. Second-generation births are a demographic echo of immigration and the high fertility among immigrants. So, larger numbers of Latino immigrants will simply produce larger numbers of second-generation Latinos.

Table 2:
2000 to 2020— 2nd Generation Dominates Growth

Change in the Hispanic Population, 2000 to 2020: 35.3 million to 60.4 million	Growth (in thousands)	Growth (in percent)	Share of Total Growth
Total Hispanic Population	25,118	71%	100%
1st Generation	6,398	45%	25%
2nd Generation	11,771	119%	47%
3rd +Generations	6,949	62%	28%

Chart 1: Share of Hispanic Population: 2000-2020

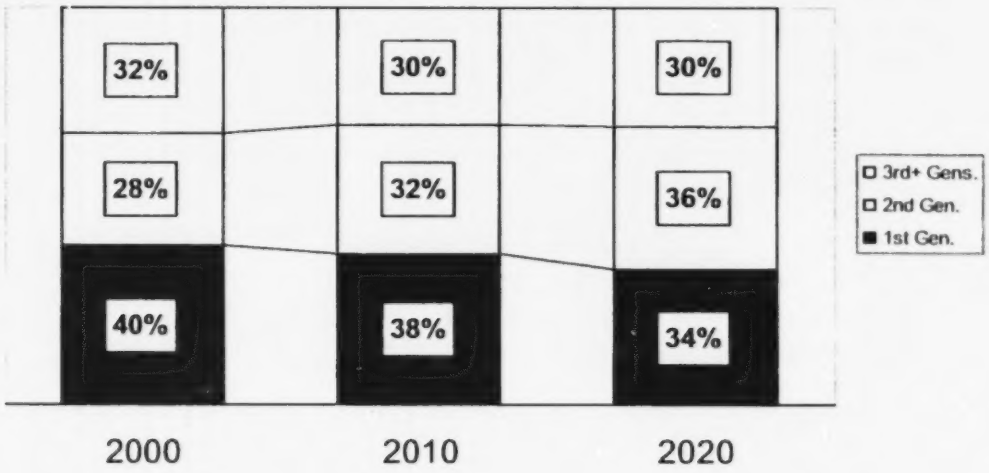
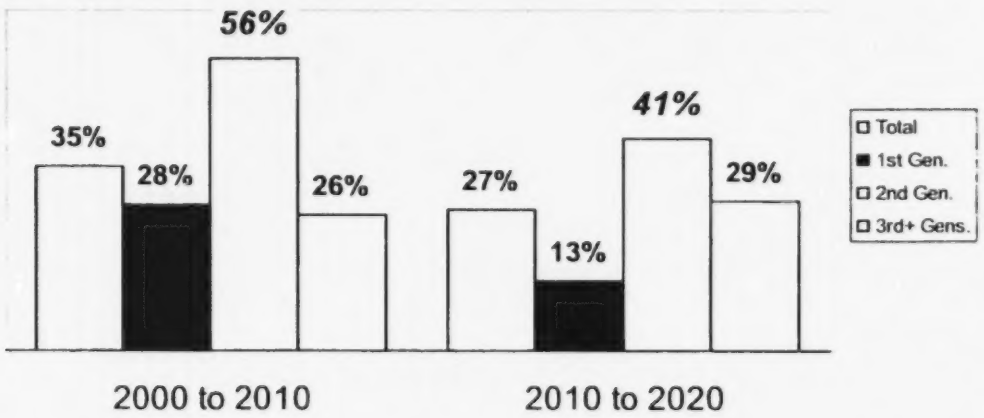


Chart 2: Growth for Hispanic Generations by Decade: 2000-2020



Using a mid-range estimate of immigration flows, the Hispanic population will grow by 25 million people between 2000 and 2020. During that time the second generation accounts for 47 percent of the increase compared to 25 percent for the first (Table 2). Moreover, the second generation more than doubles in size, increasing from 9.8 million in 2000 to 21.7 million in 2020. At that point the second generation outnumbers the first generation which totals 20.6 million.[1]

Alternative Immigration Scenarios

But what if immigration flows are greater than expected? The same basic trends are evident even with an estimate of immigration flows 50 percent higher than the mid-range assumption. This estimate produces 70 percent more growth in the first generation of Latinos between 2000 and 2020 than the mid-range assumption (Table 3). In the high immigration scenario the Hispanic population grows by 32 million over these two decades. The second generation accounts for 44 percent of this increase while the first makes up 34 percent. The turning point at which the second generation outnumbers the first generation is only postponed five years to 2025 under the higher immigration assumptions.

Table 3:
2000 to 2020—Alternative Immigration Scenarios

Mid-range Estimate [in 000s]				
	Total Hispanic	1st Generation	2nd Generation	3rd+ Generations
2020	60,424	20,555	21,659	18,210
2010	47,696	18,126	15,404	14,167
2000	35,306	14,158	9,887	11,261
High-range Estimate [in 000s]				
	Total Hispanic	1st Generation	2nd Generation	3rd+ Generations
2020	67,282	25,090	23,970	18,221
2010	51,013	20,761	16,086	14,167
2000	35,306	14,158	9,887	11,261

[1] The mid-range estimates are used for all tabulations in this study unless otherwise noted. Following the logic of Census Bureau projections, the mid-range estimates assume that current rates of immigration persist through this decade followed by slight declines during the 2010s as the pool of potential entrants of immediate relatives is drawn down. During the 2020s, immigration levels are assumed to increase substantially and then stay constant for the next two decades. This yields Hispanic immigration of 5.6 million people in the current decade, 4.4 million in the 2010s, and 4 million in the 2020s. For the Hispanic population, emigration of former immigrants averages 100–110,000 per year for the entire projection horizon. These projections use conservative assumption of fertility rates among first generation Hispanics of 3.1 births per woman. The 2000 Census served as the base for all projections.

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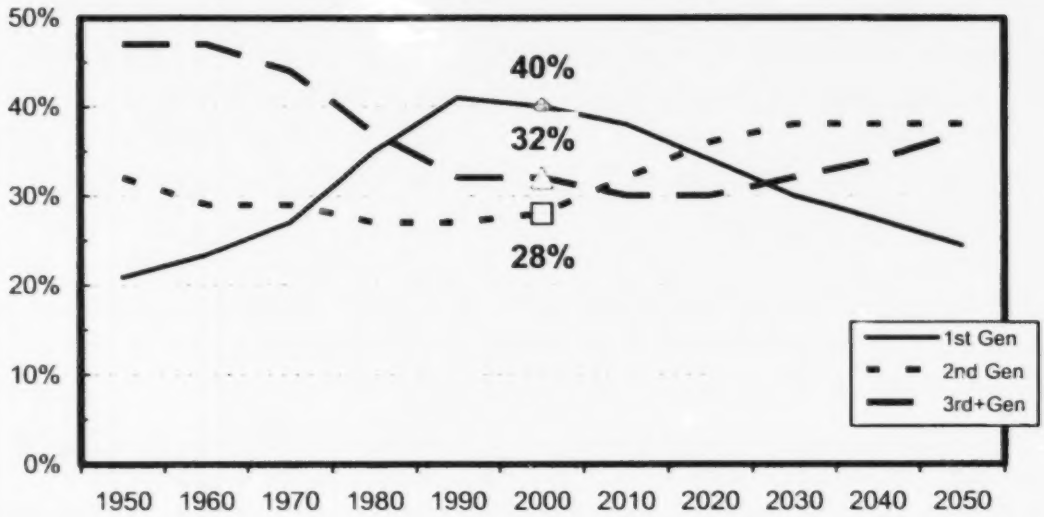
Chart 3: Shares of the Hispanic Population by Generation 1950 to 2050



Breaking down data from the decennial census counts and estimates of future growth by generation yields a historical tableau in which Hispanic population growth becomes a rapidly evolving demographic phenomenon over the course of a century (Chart 3.) Three distinct phases emerge in which each of the generational cohorts plays the leading role. Both the character and the impact of the Latino population differ in each phase.

In the middle decades of the 20th Century the Latino population was dominated by the third-plus generations, which is the segment with the deepest roots in this country. This was a period that saw the political and cultural mobilization of Latinos as a native minority group with a historical experience of discrimination. A Latino civil rights movement was launched with the creation of a variety of institutions that continue to exercise leadership roles.

By 1980, the immigrant generation was of almost equal size as the third-plus, and by 1990 the newcomers were clearly the largest segment of the Latino population. During this period a variety of issues related to immigration came to the fore, the Spanish-language media expanded and the Hispanic population spread into new areas of the country such as the Southeast and the Upper Midwest as immigrants moved in search of employment.

Then, the slow but steady growth of the second generation began to accelerate, and by the turn of the century, the era of immigrant dominance began to give way. The 2000s and 2010s will be transitional decades in which the second generation is on the rise. The children of immigrants then will be the largest segment out to the middle of this century. The education of native-born Latino young people who are being raised by immigrant parents is likely to emerge as a key policy challenge. By 2050, the children of the second generation—a new third-plus generation—become a major presence.

School and Labor Force Impacts

The rise of the second generation will have immediate consequences for the nation's schools. The number of second-generation Latinos aged 5 to 19 years old is projected to more than double from 2000 to 2020, growing from 4.4 million to 9.0 million people (Table 4). About one-in-seven of the new students enrolling in U.S. schools over these 20 years will be a second-generation Latino.

Table 4:
2000 to 2020—The 2nd Generation in the Schools

School-Age Population (5 to 19 years old)	2000	2010	2020
Hispanic 2nd Generation	4,407,000	6,780,000	8,984,001
Total U.S. Population	61,297,000	62,378,000	67,167,001
Hispanic 2nd Gen Share of Total	7.2%	10.9%	13.4%

Second generation growth will be felt just as powerfully in the economy. The non-Hispanic labor force has effectively stopped growing as the number of workers reaching retirement age or passing away is in rough balance with the number of new entrants. Thus from 2000 to 2020 the non-Hispanic labor force is projected to increase by 9 percent. Meanwhile, the Latino labor force is projected to increase by 77 percent through a combination of immigration and native-born youth reaching working age.

Although Latinos made up only 12 percent of the total U.S. labor force in 2000, the number of Latino workers is projected to increase by 12.6 million by 2020 while the far larger non-Hispanic labor force will increase by only 11.6 million.

The second generation is, and will remain, overwhelmingly young with a median age that increases from 12.8 years old to 17.2 years old from 2000 to 2020. Nonetheless it will be a major contributor to the growth of the Hispanic labor force, representing 43% of Latino growth, and to the growth of labor force overall, making up 23 percent of the increase in the nation's labor force.

Table 5:
2000 to 2020—The 2nd Generation in the Labor Market

Labor Force	1st Gen Hispanic	2nd Gen Hispanic	3rd+ Gen Hispanic	Total Hispanic	Total non-Hispanic
2000 [in 000's]	8,834	2,604	4,869	16,307	125,462
2020 [in 000's]	13,397	8,044	7,462	28,901	137,029
2000-20 change [in 000's]	4,563	5,439	2,593	12,594	11,566
2000-20 % change	52%	209%	53%	77%	9%

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Generational Characteristics

Change in the generational composition of the Latino population will have broad consequences because of important differences among the generations in a number of characteristics:

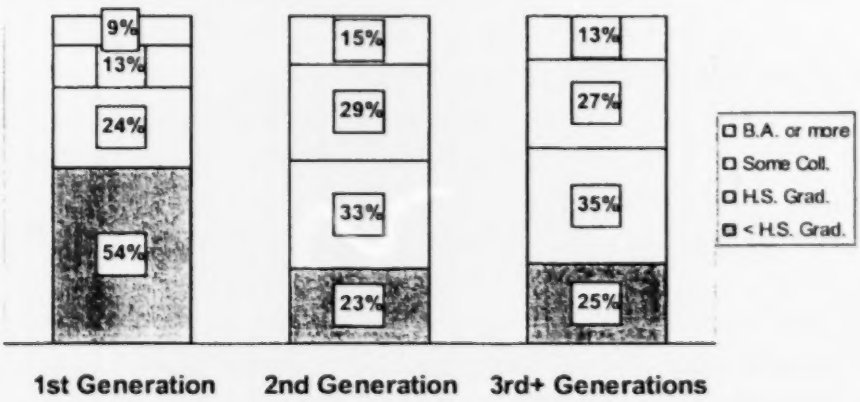
- *Language*: According to the 2002 National Survey of Latinos, conducted jointly by the Pew Hispanic Center and the Kaiser Family Foundation (Table 6), Spanish-speakers make up most of the first generation. The second generation is substantially bilingual, and the third-plus generations are primarily English speakers.

Table 6:
Primary Language Among Latinos

	Spanish-Dominant	Bilingual	English-Dominant
1st Gen	72%	24%	4%
2nd Gen	7%	47%	46%
3rd + Gen	0%	22%	78%

- *Education*: Native-born Latinos have distinctly higher levels of education than their immigrant counterparts. Thus change in the generational composition alone—without any change in attainment—will significantly lift the educational profile of the Latino population. For example, in 2000 more than half of the first generation lacked a high school diploma compared to a quarter or less of the native-born generations, and, similarly, there are significantly higher levels of college attendance among the native born (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Educational Attainment for Hispanics Aged 25 to 64, by Generation: 2000



- *Income*: Not surprisingly given the differences in language and education, native-born Latinos earn more than the first generation. According to Current Population Survey data for the second quarter of 2003, first-generation Latinos had mean weekly earnings of $457, the second generation was earning $535 per week, and the third $550.
- *Intermarriage*: First generation Latinos, like immigrants in general, tend to marry within their ethnic/racial group. That is not true of second and third-plus generation Latinos. According to recent estimates (Edmonston et al., 2003) only 8 percent of foreign-born Hispanics intermarry, compared to 32 percent of the second-generation and 57 percent of the third-plus generations.

Conclusion

Regardless of whether immigration flows from Latin America increase, decrease or stay the same, a great change in the composition of the Hispanic population is underway. The rise of the second generation is the result of births and immigration that have already taken place, and it is now an inexorable, undeniable demographic fact. These Latinos are U.S. citizens by birth and will be the products of U.S. schools and, for those reasons alone, they will present a different character and have a different impact on the nation than their immigrant parents. The Latino second generation is also still overwhelmingly young—nearly two-thirds is under the age of 18 years old. Much is still to be determined about these young people emerging from immigrant households. It is uncertain, for example, how much they will resemble the older, third-plus generations. Their cultural and political identities are likely to respond to their parents' experiences and to contemporary influences that are different from those that shaped past Latino generations. Also, their ultimate educational profile, and hence their economic status, will be determined largely by the course of an education system that is facing demands for change at almost every level. One prediction about second-generation Latinos, however, seems safe: Given their numbers, their future will be a matter of national interest.

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